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RESPONDERS GATHER FOR OPERATION SINBAD

*TWO DAY TRAINING EXERCISE TO EXAMINE
RESPONSE TO BIOLOGICAL AGENT RELEASE*

Indianapolis – Federal, state, and local responders will gather at the Muscatatuck Urban Training Center (MUTC) Thursday and Friday for “Operation SINBAD” (Southern Indiana Bioterrorism Attack and Defense), a field training exercise and response simulation sponsored by the Indiana Department of Homeland Security (IDHS).

Operation SINBAD will enable public health officials to interact and collaborate with local, state, and federal first responders to address issues surrounding the outbreak and containment of a human introduced biological agent. Approximately 25 local health departments and several hospitals, in conjunction with the Indiana State Department of Health (ISDH), will exercise their lab protocols, mass immunization plans, and procedures for utilizing the Centers for Disease Control’s (CDC) Strategic National Stockpile of pharmaceuticals.

“The plans developed by IDHS or any agency are only as good as the paper they are written on if they are not exercised,” said J. Eric Dietz, Executive Director of IDHS. “Through training and exercising we can identify strengths and weaknesses, go back to the drawing board if necessary, and ultimately advance Indiana’s preparedness to respond and recover.”

The Indiana National Guard will also display two of its key assets during Operation SINBAD. In addition to exhibiting the emerging capabilities of the MUTC, the Guard’s 53rd Weapons of Mass Destruction Civil Support Team (WMD CST) will participate in the exercise.

According to Major Paul Navas, Commander of the 53rd WMD CST, “We look forward to this opportunity to work and train with members of Indiana’s first responder community. We hope to demonstrate how the 53rd WMD CST provides Indiana with an increased detection and identification capability in regard to chemical or biological agents or suspicious substances.”

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With over \$15 million in equipment, the Guard's 53rd WMD CST can utilize state of the art technology to respond. Additionally, if requested to respond, there is no reimbursement cost to the state for the team's services.

Other participants in the exercise will include the FBI, U.S Attorney's Office Southern District of Indiana, Indiana State Police, Region 5 HazMat Team, Purdue University, Taylor University, University of Louisville, and numerous county emergency management agencies, sheriffs' departments, police departments and emergency medical services.

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